

Docket: 3816.10
March 15, 2006 (12:58pm)

Remarks

Claims 1-12, 27-29, and 33-36 remain in the application.

It is assumed that the prior amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 dated February 15, 2006 was entered.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 and 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Noguchi et al. (U.S. Patent 5,211,761, hereafter Noguchi). Applicants continue to disagree with this rejection. However, in order to expedite issuance of a patent the restrictions of claim 32, indicated as containing allowable subject matter, have been incorporated into claim 1. Accordingly, these claims should now be held allowable. It is noted that one instance of "spraying" in the incorporated matter has been amended to -plasma spraying- for better consistency.

The Examiner rejects claims 27-29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Niemiowski et al. (U.S. Patent 6,056,123, hereafter Niemiowski) in view of Noguchi. Again, Applicants continue to disagree with this rejection. Nonetheless, the restrictions of claim 37, indicated as containing allowable subject matter, have been incorporated into claim 27. Accordingly, these claims shown now be allowable.

The Examiner has rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Noguchi in view of Wang et al. (U.S. Patent 6,787,195, hereafter Wang). This claim depends from a claim believed to be in allowable form and therefore will not be separately argued at this time.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 8-13, 32, 33, and 37 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 32 has been incorporated into claim 1 and claim 37 has been incorporated into claim 27. Claims 8, 9 and 12 have been rewritten in independent form. However, claim 12 has been further amended to provide antecedent basis for the hole.

The Examiner has allowed claims 34-36.

Although the subject matter of some prior claims have been effectively canceled to obtain speedy issuance, Applicants reserve the right to prosecute these claims in a continuation

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application.

Entry of the amendment after final rejection is respectfully requested under 37 CFR 1.116 as effectively canceling claims and putting the application in condition for allowance as indicated by the Advisory Action.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, consideration and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would be helpful, he is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the listed telephone number, which is on California time.

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Respectfully submitted,


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